VEHICLE CARE INSIGHTS

Common Mistakes That Shorten Your Car's Lifespan

Seven everyday habits that quietly wear down your engine, brakes, and battery — and how to stop them before they cost you.

Why It Matters

A well-maintained vehicle can run for 200,000+ km. Small, repeated neglect is what cuts that number short — and it happens gradually enough that most owners don't notice until repairs get expensive.

The 7 habits on the following slides are the most common — and most preventable — causes of early vehicle failure.

200,000+

km a well-maintained car can reasonably reach

3 in 5

breakdowns are traced to deferred routine maintenance

7

everyday mistakes covered in this deck

1

MISTAKE 1

Skipping Oil Changes

Oil lubricates and cools your engine. Old, dirty oil loses that ability fast.

- Running past the recommended interval lets sludge build up inside the engine
- Friction rises between moving parts, generating excess heat
- Over time this leads to premature wear — and in severe cases, full engine failure

✓ **The Fix**

Follow your owner's manual interval (typically every 8,000–12,000 km, or every 3,000–5,000 km for older engines). Check oil level and color monthly, and never ignore the oil-change light.

2

MISTAKE 2

Ignoring Warning Lights

Dashboard lights exist to catch small problems before they become big ones.

- A check-engine light rarely fixes itself — the underlying issue keeps progressing
- Driving on despite the alert often turns a minor sensor fix into major repair work
- Some lights (oil pressure, temperature, brakes) signal risks to safety, not just cost

✓ **The Fix**

Treat any dashboard light as a same-week appointment, not a someday task. A quick diagnostic scan is inexpensive; the failure it prevents usually isn't.

3

MISTAKE 3

Neglecting Tire Care

Tires are the only part of the car touching the road — and one of the most overlooked.

- Under- or over-inflated tires wear unevenly and reduce fuel efficiency
- Skipping rotations lets front and rear tires wear at very different rates
- Bad alignment quietly strains suspension components as well as tires

✓ **The Fix**

Check tire pressure monthly, rotate every 8,000–10,000 km, and get an alignment whenever you notice pulling, vibration, or uneven tread wear.

4

MISTAKE 4

Delaying Brake Service

Worn brakes rarely fail all at once — they degrade gradually, and quietly.

- Worn pads left in place let metal-on-metal contact damage rotors
- Damaged rotors cost far more to replace than pads alone
- Reduced stopping power is a safety risk long before it's a mechanical one

✓ **The Fix**

Listen for squealing or grinding, feel for pulsing when braking, and have pads and rotors inspected at every second oil change.

5

MISTAKE 5

Skipping Fluid Checks

Coolant, transmission, and power-steering fluid all break down and get overlooked.

- Low or old coolant lets the engine run hotter, risking overheating and warped parts
- Degraded transmission fluid causes rough shifting and accelerates internal wear
- Old brake fluid absorbs moisture, reducing braking performance over time

✓ **The Fix**

Check fluid levels and colour every oil change, and follow manufacturer intervals for coolant and transmission fluid flushes — usually every 2–5 years.

6

MISTAKE 6

Short Trips & Aggressive Driving

How you drive matters as much as how often you service the car.

- Frequent short trips prevent the engine from reaching full operating temperature
- That trapped condensation contributes to sludge and internal corrosion over time
- Hard acceleration and braking accelerate wear on tires, brakes, and the transmission

✓ **The Fix**

Combine short errands into longer trips when possible, let the engine warm up, and favour smooth acceleration and early braking.

7

MISTAKE 7

Ignoring the Battery

Batteries fade gradually, then fail suddenly — usually at the worst moment.

- Corrosion on terminals weakens the connection long before the battery dies outright
- Extreme heat and cold both accelerate battery degradation
- A slow-cranking engine is an early warning most drivers dismiss as normal

✓ **The Fix**

Have the battery load-tested once a year after year three, keep terminals clean, and replace proactively rather than waiting for a no-start morning.

Your Quick-Reference Checklist

Seven habits, one goal: a car that lasts.

1. **Change oil on schedule**
2. **Act on warning lights fast**
3. **Check & rotate tires**
4. **Service brakes early**
5. **Check fluids regularly**
6. **Drive smoothly, warm up the engine**

Mistake 7 — Ignoring the battery — rounds out the list above.

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